

**New Shoreham Town Council Meeting
Town Hall, Old Town Road, Block Island
Tuesday, January 3, 2012
7:00 p.m.**

Present: Present: First Warden Kimberley H. Gaffett, Second Warden Raymond J. Torrey, Town Councilor Peter B. Baute, Town Councilor Kenneth C. Lacoste and Town Councilor Richard P. Martin. Also present was Town Manager Nancy O. Dodge. Town Clerk Fiona Fitzpatrick was present to take the minutes of the meeting.

First Warden Kimberley Gaffett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Warden's Report

First Warden Gaffett reported landing fee remittance in the amount of \$119,201.17 was received from Interstate Navigation. Rob Gilpin and the North Light Commission have been featured in the Providence Journal Express for their accomplishments renovating the North Light.

Public Input:

Grace Luddy submitted a letter in opposition to hunting on weekends at Rodman's Hollow. It is attached to these minutes. Elliot Taubman announced there will be a Game Dinner at end of February that will raise funds for the Old Timers Lunch fund.

1. Discuss and act on proposed Town of New Shoreham/RI DEM Habitat Management Plan for the Black Rock Parcel (Plat 12 lot 13 a.k.a. Rodman's Hollow)

First Warden Kim Gaffett said Cathy Sparks, Chief of Forest Environment for the RI DEM was not able to attend the meeting as planned, and sent her regrets.

Ms. Gaffett read the executive summary of the Black Rock management plan: "Between 1985 and 1986, 115 acres of land in southwestern Block Island were placed into a mutual conservation restriction and right of way easement shared between the Town of New Shoreham and the RI Department of Environmental Management. The shared ownership status of this parcel requires a collaborative approach to land stewardship and management of public access. The RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) and the Town of New Shoreham will therefore employ a consensus based approach to address matters regarding the management of public access in ways that are sensitive to community concerns and historic uses of the area. Infrastructure maintenance for parking and public information, signs and regulation of hunting and other recreational opportunities will be addressed through an annual review and planning process. This document summarizes the significant biological features of this area, outlines endangered species needs and describes habitat manipulations necessary to maintain these unique features."

The "habitat manipulations" are mowing schedules to maximize field habitats in the southwestern part of the Island, shifting the management area from shrubland to herbaceous grassland. She reiterated that decisions about hunting were not contained in the document. Hunting and other decisions will be addressed in a continuing consensus-based planning and review process with neither party sole jurisdiction. Ms. Gaffett said the Council rejected weekend hunting on the parcel after hearing loud and clear opposition last year. Suggestions for management included shifting the parking area a few feet west. There was a discussion of what season to mow for best bird management.

- Clerical corrections (plat and lot numbers, etc) will be made
- The plan will be amended to add references to deer with regard to Lyme disease and public health, and as an influence on flora due to browsing.
- Any controlled burns on the parcel will be done under command of the local fire department

Dr. Baute moved to approve the Habitat Management Plan for the Black Rock Parcel between the RI DEM and the Town of New Shoreham, incorporating typographical corrections, and incorporating addition of language regarding deer with respect to habitat protection and the important issue of Lyme disease.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Mary Sue Record asked that a hunting proposal be brought forward now that the property is under a management agreement.

2. Receive and act on Electric Utilities Task Group letter re: distribution system upgrade and financing; and Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing initiatives.

The EUTG made two recommendations: that the Town Council work collaboratively with the EUTG, Block Island Power Company and Richard LaCapra to analyze and prepare a rate request to the PUC for distribution upgrades, and that the Town Council pursue the Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing . Town Manager Dodge reported EUTG members Shorey and MacMullan will put together information on what a docket for the rate request would entail, and will report back. Dr. Baute reported on the Property Assessed Clean Energy initiatives that exist in many states. State legislation is needed. The First Warden will contact Senator Sosnowski regarding legislative initiatives; Dr. Baute will return with more information.

Dr. Baute moved, seconded by First Warden Gaffett, to endorse recommendation of EUTG with regard to a rate case for distribution upgrade.

Ayes: 4(Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste) Nays: 0 Abstain: 1 (Martin)

3. Receive and act on letter from BI Power Co. re: BIPCo Net Metering

Block Island Power Company principal Cliff McGinnes was present. A letter was received from Block Island Power Company President Al Cassazza announcing BIPCo's intention of continuing the reverse (net) metering agreement of 2001 with no changes. The letter stated Block Island's peak demand was 4040kW during 2011. The policy provides a 2% cap for net metering .

Dr. Baute asked why most solar installations are not being net metered at this time. The net metering application process was discussed. Engineer Chris Warfel was present in the audience and reported BIPCo did not respond in a timely manner when problems were encountered with the meters. He presented a packet of his correspondence on the issue. Mr. McGinnes said the policy was voluntary and will stay that way unless the Town opens a docket which will be costly for the Town, the Power Company, the Division and the ratepayers.

The Town Council agreed by consensus that the First Warden would send Dr. Casazza a letter with questions about the current net metering policy:

- How many customers reverse (net) metered in 2011?
- With regard to paragraph 4 of the agreement, how much electricity flowed into the distribution system through reverse (net) metering in 2011? What percentage of BIPCo's annual peak (4040 kW in 2011) was obtained through reverse (net) metering in 2011?
- How many customers made application for reverse (net) metering since the program began? How many of those were approved and how many were rejected? How does BIPCo determine how to accept or reject a net metering installation?
- How does BIPCo determine how much power is accepted from an individual installation?

4. Consider and act on setting a Public Hearing for proposed amendment to TNS General Ordinances: Chapter 8, License and Business Reg. Article X. Outdoor Entertainment Sec. 8-255 (10:30 pm ending hour for outdoor entertainment associated with marriage receptions)

No action was taken.

5. Continue Annual appointments: Boards, Committees, Commissions and individual Town appointees

Motor Vehicles For Hire Commission:

Ms. Gaffett moved to reappoint Connie LaRue to a three year term on the Commission, which will expire in December, 2014. Motion seconded by Dr. Baute.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

One vacancy remains on the Commission.

Conservation Commission:

Ms. Gaffett moved, seconded by Dr. Baute, to reappoint Edward Phillips Jr., David Roosa and Leslie D. Slate to the Conservation Commission to serve three year terms expiring in December, 2014.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Deer Task Force:

Ms. Gaffett moved, seconded by Mr. Martin, to reappoint Christopher Blane to the Deer Task Force, for a one-year term.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Chris Blansfield has elected to retire from the task force; the board has seven members and no vacancies.

Harbors Committee

Mr. Lacoste moved, seconded by Mr. Torrey, to appoint Charles Gustafson to the alternate position on the Harbors Committee to a term which will expires December, 2012.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Fence Viewer

Dr. Baute moved, seconded by Mr. Lacoste, to appoint Nancy Greenaway to a one-year term as Viewer of Fences.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

6. Announce CRMC Public Notice re: Town of New Shoreham application for aquaculture lease

No action was needed. Chris Warfel was present and reported on a notification regarding the habitat restoration project and he will be attending the next Shellfish Commission meeting.

7. Correspondence: 1661 Inn & Hotel Manisses re: grease trap management

No action was needed.

8. Minutes: November 15, 2011; November 16, 2011; November 28, 2011; December 5, 2011; December 12, 2011

A motion to approve the minutes with corrections noted was made by Dr. Baute and seconded by Mr. Torrey.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

At 8:30 a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Torrey and seconded by Mr. Martin.

Ayes: 5 (Gaffett, Torrey, Baute, Lacoste, Martin) Nays: 0

Minutes approved January 14, 2012

Fiona Fitzpatrick
Town Clerk